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NOVEL SPORT GAME AND FIELD

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to spectator sports generally, although there is no requirement that the game of the present invention be played before spectators. The game of the present invention has certain similarities to basketball, hockey and soccer, but is quite different from all of them.

Background of the Invention

Spectator sports, such as football, baseball, basketball, hockey and soccer, have become so extensively promoted as spectator sports that the team owners have been enabled to pay very lucrative salaries to the team members and team conquests, through professional leagues, have become major business activities, both in the United States and in certain foreign countries.

Each of these sports, however, suffers from various periods of boredom for spectators, even during what may be considered "action". Also, even when "action" occurs, it may be routine and unexciting. Examples would be free throws in basketball, unproductive ground plays in football, catching a fly ball in baseball, and much movement in both soccer and hockey.

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2 In addition, action of the players is generally limited
3 to body movements on stable surfaces, such as ground, wood
4 floor or ice rinks, which movements may be limited by the
5 normal physical capabilities of the players as human beings.
6 An exception may be the sport of water polo, but actually
7 the water in which the game is played, tends to limit quick
8 movements of the participants.
9

10 Summary of the Invention

11 The present invention provides an added dimension to
12 competitive sports in that the surface upon which the game
13 of the present invention is played is resilient, with the
14 result that the normal movement of players in running and
15 jumping may be so modified as to enable the game
16 participants to perform feats of which they would not be
17 capable of performing on conventional ground, broad or ice
18 surfaces.

19 The underfoot resiliency may be effected by providing a
20 planar field constructed of adjacent rectangular trampoline-
21 type panels supported by and on crossing cables, which
22 cables themselves are supported at the edges of the field by
23 being secured to a plurality of vertical posts.

24 The concept of using this type of underfoot surface may
25 be utilized in a number of different types of game contests.
26 However, in the presently preferred form, the field may be
27 rectangular, divided in half with goals or targets at each
28 end to be protected by defending members scatteredly

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2 stationed in their half of the field, as members of the
3 opposing team attempt to move into the defenders' field in
4 an effort to place a ball or other playing object into some
5 type of goal or target disposed on the end wall behind the
6 half of the field being defended.

7 In one embodiment of the invention, both the sides and
8 ends of the field are bordered by sides formed of resilient
9 panels which rise from the edges of the planar and extend
10 outwardly from the panels at approximately a 45 degree
11 angle.

12 The actual playing field in the presently preferred
13 embodiment may be a 75 foot by 165 foot long rectangle with
14 side panels of between 15 and 18 feet in height extending
15 from the edges of the rectangular field angularly upwardly
16 and outwardly. The end and side panels greatly enhance the
17 safety of the players who will frequently be found to cross
18 the edges of the planar portion of the field. The field and
19 its end and side panels are formed by an assembly of 15 foot
20 by 15 foot heavy fabric sheets. From the edges of each
21 sheet extend six to ten inch long outwardly projecting
22 spring connectors.

23 The panels are supported by a grid of steel cables,
24 each of which may be between 1/2 of an inch to 3/4 of an
25 inch in diameter. The longitudinal cables will preferably
26 cross or be crossed in abutment with the transverse cables,
27 and the outer cables will be attached at their ends to heavy
28 supporting poles, such as telephone poles, or steel poles

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2 embedded securely in the surrounding ground surface. The
3 panels springs will be attached to the cables forming the
4 grid, with parallel cables being spaced from each other by a
5 distance equal to the width or length of the panel, plus
6 twice the length of the springs, when the latter are
7 extended. The outer ends of the springs of each panel will
8 be hooked over the cables supporting the panel. To prevent
9 injury to the players who may fall or bounce along a strip
10 of the field above a cable to which the end springs of
11 adjacent panels are hooked or otherwise attached, a strip of
12 resilient material, such as rubber approximately three feet
13 wide will attach to and over the springs, thereby covering
14 the springs and the cable over which the padding is laid and
15 to which its underside is attached.

16 The angled end panels of the thus formed court may be
17 provided with one or more goal openings, and the rectangular
18 planar surface of the court may be marked for various
19 purposes, such marking preferably being accomplished by
20 providing different color panels disposed at predetermined
21 locations. For at least one form of a playing surface, the
22 rectangle may be bisected transversely into two opposing
23 half-courts.

24 To play a game on the field or court thus described,
25 two teams of players are placed on opposite sides of the
26 bisecting line of the court or playing field. Each team may
27 be comprised of some plurality of players, of either or both
28 sexes, as, for example, each team might have as its players

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2 two women and four men. The object of the game is to
3 advance a ball, which may be generally the size and shape of
4 a football formed of a foam and plastic. The ball should be
5 resilient enough to avoid injuring a player who may be hit
6 by it.

7 In one form of the game, one team is given possession
8 of the ball for a period of five minutes in which to score
9 one or more points by getting through the defensive team to
10 throw or otherwise deposit the ball in one of the opposing
11 team's goals. The ball may be advanced by throwing, running
12 and kicking on the field which, because of the resiliency of
13 the panels, may enable a player to bounce into the air,
14 either from a planar field panel or from an angled side
15 panel. Because of the resilient nature of the field panels,
16 it may be expected that movements of players across them
17 will be erratic and, when players acquire sufficient skill,
18 most unusual, through the trampoline effect of the resilient
19 panels.

20 In one form of the game, it may consist of four ten
21 minute quarters, with a five minute break between each
22 quarter. If the side having possession of the ball fails to
23 score during its five minute possession period, the ball is
24 then turned over to the opposing team for its five minute
25 possession period.

26 Among rules for a preferred form of the game, tackling
27 would be permitted only on the field surface. Blocking and
28 bumping are permitted by a defensive player who is air-

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2 borne.

3 Also, in the preferred form of the game, each side of
4 the field is marked with a central circular area. When a
5 player enters that area, if he or she chooses to throw the
6 ball, the player must jump or bounce into the air to
7 accomplish the throw.

8 When a plurality of goal receptacles are provided at
9 each end of the field, one such goal should be centered and
10 any allowed foul shots must be directed to such center goal.

11 In the presently contemplated form of the game, the
12 panels abutting the angled end rising up from the planar
13 field are specially marked, such as, in red to form an "end
14 zone", and a permanent goalie is stationed in this red end
15 zone. To block any attempt on goal, the goalie must move or
16 bounce in the air within the red end zone.

17 There may also be provided an additional specially
18 marked center zone, which may comprise three panels in
19 length and extend completely across the width of the planar
20 portion of the field, with one and a half panels on each
21 side of the bisector. This zone may also be marked in red
22 and, whenever a player enters any of the three specially
23 marked zones (the center zone and each end zone) the player
24 must be bouncing in the air or otherwise moving continuously
25 until he or she leaves such zone.

26 Because of the resiliency and trampoline-effect of the
27 panels comprising the planar field, as well as the end and
28 side angled bordering panels, it may readily be appreciated

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2 that the game adds a new dimension to such competition
3 sports as soccer, basketball or hockey. It will, of course,
4 require some teaching, and practice, on the part of players
5 to acquire skill in playing the game, but skillful players
6 utilizing the bounce effects of the panels, will not only
7 enjoy the game itself, but will provide a sport of great
8 interest to spectators.
9

10 Description of the Drawings

11 In the accompanying drawings,

12 Figure 1 is a perspective view of the basic structure
13 of the field.

14 Figure 2 is an enlarged side elevation of the field
15 shown in Figure 1.

16 Figure 3 is a perspective view of the field shown in
17 Figure 1 without the posts, but showing in phantom the
18 disposition of cable supports for the planar field and side
19 panels.

20 Figure 4 is an enlarged top view of a cable
21 intersection showing spring connections between the corners
22 of the four panels and intersecting cables.

23 Figure 5 is an enlarged plan view of the inside of the
24 field as marked for the preferred embodiment of the game.
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26 Description of the Preferred Embodiment

27 The basic layout of the field of the present invention
28 is shown in Figure 1, and comprises a planar rectangular

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2 field 10, 155 feet in length by 75 feet in width. This
3 planar field 10 is circumscribed by upwardly and outwardly
4 extending angled ends 12a, 12b, and sides 14a, 14b. As best
5 shown in Figure 3, the configuration of the planar field 10
6 and its ends 12a, 12b and sides 14a, 14b, may be maintained
7 by a grid of steel cables 20a, 20a', 20b, 20b' and 20c,
8 20c', 20d, 20d' secured to the upper ends of inner posts 16
9 and outer posts 18. The planar rectangular field 10 and its
10 sides 12a, 12b, and ends 14a, 14b are actually formed by
11 adjacently disposed rectangular panels 24 supported by a
12 grid 26 of interconnected cables 27a, 27b within the area
13 defined by the end and side cables 20a, 20a', 20b, 20b', 20c
14 and 20c' and 20d, 20d'. The arrangement of this grid 26 of
15 cables 27a, 27b may best be understood by a consideration of
16 Figure 3 of the drawings. Parallel longitudinal cables 27a,
17 spaced from each other by a distance equal to the dimensions
18 of a panel 24 plus the expanded length of two of the end
19 springs 28 (Figure 4), are provided to extend from the upper
20 end cable 20d and over and secured to the lower end cable
21 20b, across the full length of the planar area 10, then over
22 and secured to the opposite lower end cable 20b', and up to
23 the upper end cable 20d' to which latter cable the end of
24 cable 27a is attached.

25 Correspondingly, the transverse cables 27b extend from
26 upper side cable 20C over and secured to lower side cable
27 20a to and secured to the opposite lower side cable 20a' and
28 up to the upper side cable 20c'.

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2 Each of the panels 24 may be formed of a heavy duty
3 fabric, such as sail cloth, the edges 26 of which are
4 provided with outwardly extending springs 28 for hooking
5 over or otherwise being secured to one of the cables 27a and
6 27b..

7 The sides 14a, 14b and ends 12a and 12b are formed of
8 panels 38 which are generally similar to the panels 24,
9 except for angular shaping at the corners 32a, 32b, 32c and
10 ²
34d.

11 In order to prevent injury to the players who may
12 either trip or fall onto the springs 28, where they attach
13 to the cables 27a, 27b, 27c, 27d as shown in Figure 4, a
14 heavy-duty pad 29 with a cloth cover is provided to overlie
15 the panel edges 26, the extending springs 28 and the cable
16 27a or 27b to which the springs 28 may be attached. This
17 padding 29 may be held in place by attachment on its
18 underside to the springs 28 and/or cable 27a (27b, 27c or
19 27d) and should overlap the panel edges 26.

20 Each end 12a, 12b of the assembly 10 may be provided
21 with one or more openings 34, 34a, 34b, 34c, which may serve
22 as goals for the game herein described to be played on the
23 field or court 10. In addition, the entire field may be
24 bisected by a line 36 and the panels 24 marked or colored to
25 fit the rules of the game.

26 While different types of games may be played on the
27 described field assembly 10, the presently preferred game
28 would provide for three red or other special colored zones,

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2 38a, 38b and 38c. The end zones 38a and 38c each comprise
3 one set of adjacent panels which abut an end 12a or 12b of
4 the field. The central zone 38b may comprise a block of
5 three panels 24 lengthwise and all adjacent panels 24 from
6 one side of the court to the other. When bisected by the
7 line 36, the result is that each side of the field 10 will
8 have a transverse block 25 of one and a half panels 24
9 extending for the full length of the bisector. Centrally
10 disposed in the panel 24a on each side is a circular foul
11 shot area 24'.

12 The presently preferred form of the game to be played
13 on the field thus described in detail has been fully
14 explained above in the Summary of the Invention, and need
15 not be repeated at this point. Suffice it to say that the
16 resiliency of the panels 24 connected by springs 28 to the
17 grid 26 of cables 27a, 27b, 27c, 27d will result in quite
18 different movements of players from those which would be
19 expected as players traverse solid ground. In addition,
20 because of the trampoline effect possible with each panel
21 24, the players, through bouncing or jumping movements,
22 particularly near the centers of the panels 24 will be able
23 to develop unusual and unexpected movements which may either
24 enable them to avoid or pass by an opposing defensive
25 player, or to block the approach of an offensive player or
26 the passage of the ball which the offensive player may be
27 attempting to throw into one of the end zone goals 34a, 34b,
28 34c, or 34d.